لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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Tabuk 1355 — September 1976

ACTING EDITOR

NUR-UD-DIN MUNEER

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was born in 1835 at Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the false Religious philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his forefathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world, and that he had come instead as the Promised Messiah.

The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs, to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences of their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

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The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor-ud-Din as Khalifa-tul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Khalifa-tul Masih II. During his 52-year long leadership, the Khalifa-tul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named with one accord, Sahibzada Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifa-tul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquiries may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to :

(For inland correspondents)
Nazir Islah-o-Irshad,
Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya,
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Secretary,
Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions,
Tahrik-i-Jadid, Rabwah, Pakistan.

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF ISLAM

This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents true Islam. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions, Islamic mysticism and current topics. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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NUR-UD-DIN MUNEER

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The Review of Religions

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The first Mosque in Sweden

Invoking the blessings and mercy of God and offering humble and earnest prayers for the ascendancy of Islam, Hazrat Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the third Successor of the holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, inaugurated the first mosque in Sweden on Friday, the 20th August 1976. He is at present on a short visit to Europe for furthering the cause of Islam. Some 600 persons from Europe, Asia and Indonesian Archipelago participated in the ceremony. The mosque has been built in Goteborg and its cost met from the Ahmadiyya Centenary Jubilee Fund, intended for establishing Islamic centres all over the world and for publishing extensively Quran translations and other Islamic literature.

Observing in his inaugural address that a mosque in Islam belonged to Allah alone and that its doors were open to all His true worshippers, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III, exhorted

its custodians to keep it always clean. He prayed that the mosque may become a permanent centre for the diffusion of Islam and for the radiation of its heavenly light.

The Goteborg Mosque marks another step forward in the campaign for Islamization of the whole world, launched in 1889, by the Movement's Founder Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi.

The Movement has since raised its missionary Centres in many parts of the world and broadcast its literature on Islam for the benefit of those who want to enlighten themselves with its sublime teachings. Similar endeavours have also been made in Europe where mosques have been built in England, Holland, Germany, Switzerland and Denmark and now in Sweden and also literature produced in many European languages.

The Promised Messiah's heart was overflowing with sentiments of affection and love for the Western nations. He longed it very much that they might quickly join Islam and so become deserving of the grace of God and advance in spiritual knowledge also as they have progressed surpassingly in the worldly knowledge. In his writings he has often repeated his prayers that God Almighty may grant them a keen insight into spiritual truths and that they may recognise and worship only the One True God of Islam. There is a tradition of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him) pointing towards the rising of the sun in the West. The Promised Messiah has put on it the following interpretation which shows how deeply he felt for the spiritual welfare of the Western nations.

He says :

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"The tradition that the sun will rise in the West I do believe in it in all its aspects. But it was disclosed to me in a vision that this phenomenon signified the ultimate acceptance of Islam by the western people. Since very old times they have been lost in the darkness of disbelief and aberration. But now they will be illumined

by the sun of Truth and partake of the blessings of Islam.

"I saw that I an in London, standing on a pulpit and explicating the truth of Islam in a speech in English full of cogent proofs. Subsequently I caught many partridge—like white birds, sitting on small trees. I interpreted it to mean that although I may have not the chance to address these people personally but my writings will spread among them, and many of them, who are upright, will accept the Truth.

"The fact is that the Western nations have had little association with religious truths. It seems that God Almighty gave religious wisdom wholly to Asia and worldly wisdom exclusively to Europe and America. The prophets from the first to the last have all appeared in Asia and excellence in sainthood has also been bestowed on Asians. But now God Almighty wants to cast His Merciful look on these people (i.e., the western nations).

(Izalai Auham, pp. 376-377)

Offering our heartiest congratulations to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih on this auspicious occasion We pray that the new mosque in Goteborg may give a fillip to the process of Islamising the West and so help fulfilling soon the Promised Messiah's cherished aspirations.

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Quran on the identity of Adam

A gist of an Urdu note on the identity of Hazrat Adam in Tafsiri Kabir, Vol. I Part I (Eng. Commentary of the Holy Quran) by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, Second Successor of the Promised Messiah. (Ed.)

According the Holy Quran, Hazrat Adam was the first man to receive Divine revelation and to initiate social organisation on this earth. He was not the first man to be created on it. In fact human beings were living and multiplying themselves on this planet before him.

The Quran also repudiates the idea that the first progenitor of the human race was created by God all of a sudden and his mate was then made from his rib. These theories related by the Bible and other scriptures have in fact been wrongly attributed to Islam.

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From among the modern philosopher scientists, Darwin was the first to discard these conceptions. He claimed that instead of emerging suddenly, man has developed into his present physical shape from a very insignificant beginning. According to him, the particle of life evolved continually for millions of years from simpler animal forms to higher and still higher ones, until it became an ape-like animal which he calls the "missing link". From this missing link, he says, man stemmed as the culminating stage in the process of evolution.

Some German and French thinkers consider that the Universe as well as man have come into being through the continuous metamorphosis of the Deity. They hold that the Person of God Almighty Himself, or to put it in other words, the Eternal Law itself, has become man, after passing through

multitudinous changes and that he is the last known stage in this process of evolution. These philosophers have tried to give a scientific orientation to Hindu and Babylonian mythology.

The Holy Quran resolves this problem in a different manner. It concedes that the law of evolution is an essential truth. It is indeed working in this world and it is through its prolonged operation that the Physical and spiritual perfection of the universe has come about. But at the same time it denounces the idea of man's evolution from animals as conceived by Darwinism. According to it man did not appear on this earth as a chance product of animal evolution but as a fulfilment of the Divine Word. From the very beginning, his life particle underwent evolution independently of other animals.

In this context the following verses of the Holy Quran are very illuminating.

"What is the matter with you that you expect not wisdom and staidness from Allah."

"And He has created you in different forms and different conditions.

"Have you not seen how Allah has created seven heavens in perfect harmony,

'And has placed the moon therein as a light, and made the sun as lamp.

'And Allah has created you to grow as a good growth from the earth.

"Then will He cause you to return thereto, and He will bring you forth a new bringing forth. (71 : 14-19)

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The points which emerge clearly from these verses are as under :

1. The creation of man has undergone many cycles of development. The Arabic word (طور) means measure ; limit ; state or condition, etc. (Aqrab)

So its derivative (اطوارا) occuring in the verse would signify that God Almighty has created man by taking him across

many limits and by changing him in respect of his forms and faculties into many conditions. When this term is taken to mean 'measure' and 'limit', the verse would signify that in every new 'measure' and 'limit' man held a position quite distinct from the one which he held previously. The term also connotes, ' form ' and 'condition'. When taken in this sense, it would signify that man had different forms in different periods of time and he was progressing in different conditions.

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2. Secondly, the verse points out that the process of human creation started functioning even before the creation of the Universe. For, the verse alludes twice to the fact of man's creation, once before the creation of the universe and for the second time after it. It follows from this sequence that the particle of life which subsequently took the shape of man existed in some form even when the universe had not yet come into being and its matter as yet consisted of dust or smoke.

3. The third point deducible from the above verse is that when the universe finally came into being and our planetary system was formed, man entered into a new period of evolution. Made of dust, now he appeared on the earth. But his condition was weak like that of plants which are unable to move and which draw their sustenance from the wet earth. Slowly, however, he began to gather strength and viability, also power to move about freely.

4. The fourth point brought out in this verse concerns with man's death and resurrection. It says that after giving man life, God Almighty makes him die and takes him back into the earth which absorbs the corpse readily. This shows that he was made of dust, for had it not been so, the earth could not absorb his body. Further the verse says that this is not the end of man. Some essential elements of his developed state will survive. God Almighty will resuscitate him and make him render his account.

This verse shows clearly that man was not created at a

particular moment suddenly. Rather God Almighty provided for the creation of universe and that of man simultaneously. Then evolving man at different times, He brought him forth on the earth, made him grow and endowed him with a form and also with intelligence and wisdom.

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Going further back, the Quran says that at a certain time the very matter, the origin of everything on the universe had no existence. God Almighty created it from nothing. It says, "Does not man remember that We created him before, when he was nothing ? (19 : 68)

According to the Holy Quran, matter is not co-eternal with God but is His creation. In the beginning there was neither any particle of life nor any matter, nothing indeed except the person of God Almighty. He created matter and then fashioned everything out of it.

The following verse of the Holy Quran will elucidate further the subject of man's creation.

"And Allah created you from dust ; (35 : 12) i.e., a stage came upon man during evolution that its particles were mixed in dry dust.

2. Then God mixed water in dust and made the particle of life lying dormant in it to grow. The Quran says "Who has made perfect everything He has created. And He began the creation of man from clay. (32 : 8)

It is obvious from this verse that the particle of life began to grow from the time when water got mixed with it. The following verse illustrates the same point.

"And we made of water every living thing. Will they not then believe ? (21 : 31)

So the first period of human evolution began when dust containing the particle of life got mixed with water and changed into clay. At the end of this period when he had become man he entered into his second period of progress. His race

then began to be propagated through an "insignificant fluid", i.e. the sperm drop. The Quran says,

"Then He made his progeny from an extract of an insignificant fluid. (32 : 9)

In this verse the Quran decisively rejects the Darwinian theory that man has evolved from other animals and claims that his particle of life became man independently. For it says that after having become man, his race began to multiply through sperm-drop, which means that since his reproduction had started from sperm-drop he had become man. But according to Darwinism, while he was still evolving from lower animal forms, man was already propagating his race through sperm-drop.

The following verse of the Holy Quran clarifies this point further.

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"We have created man from a mingled sperm-drop that We might try him. (76 : 3) i.e. when We gave him human form he began to reproduce through a mingled sperm-drop.

The Arabic word امشاج is a derivative of مشج which means a mixture, a compound. The verse signifies that human sperm-drop is a mixture of various powers and faculties and is sharply distinguished in its potentialities from the sperm-drop of other animals. Human offspring has a unique disposition. He is capable of outgrowing conventional behaviour and making many sided progress, in many different spheres. But animals cannot do so. They are bound to follow the track trod by their forbears. Today's monkey is the same as were his ancestors thousands of years ago. So is the case with other animals. Their brain power is static. They cannot change a whit from the rut made by their ancestors. But humans can do so. It is evident from the progress which man has made in Arts. Sciences and technology in the modern times. Man is endowed with unlimited power for advancement. Such fundamental difference in potentialities points out that the sperm-drop

of man is quite distinct from the sperm drop of other animals and must have sprung from a different root.

After his physical evolution had been completed, man began to develop spiritually. His latent qualities of hearing and seeing began to function. The Quran says :

"So We made him hearing, seeing. (76 : 3)

The quality of hearing and seeing in the terminology of the Holy Quran signifies the ability to hear the voice of God and to see signs of His Might. The men who cannot do so have been called by the Holy Quran, "deaf" and 'blind', (11 : 24-25). The spiritual change was first of all manifested in the time of Hazrat Adam, in whom this quality found its perfection. God Almighty blessed him with revelation and gave him the law of Shariah, obedience to which would make man deserving of the Paradise for which he was created. So Adam indeed ushered the era of spiritual evolution of man and was the first prophet, not the first man.

The following verses of the Holy Quran also corroborate the same view,

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"And when thy Lord said to the angels, 'I am about to place a Vicegerant in the earth, They said, "wilt Thou place therein such as will cause disorder in it, and shed blood ? and we glorify Thee with Thy praise and extol Thy Holiness. He answered, I know what you know not" (2 : 31)

The very texture of this verse implies that man existed before Adam. He has been mentioned in it as Vicegerent designate of God. "Khalifa" means a vicegerent who enforces the law of God. This appointment presupposes the existence of a community of people in whom the law was to be enforced. So it must be conceded that a group of people must already be there whom Adam was to teach. This word "Khalifa" has been used in the Quran for David also. (38 : 27) He was obviously not the first man but a prophet entrusted

with the job of guiding his people. The same must hold good in the case of Adam for he had also been similarly appointed.

2. "And we indeed created you and then gave you excellent qualities, then said We to the angels, 'submit to Adam; and they all submitted. But Iblis did not; he will not be of those who submit. (7 : 12)

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In the former verse the commandment to angels was made without any allusion to Adam's contemporaries. But in this verse the people co-existent with him have also been addressed and that also in plural. At first, reference is made to the original creation of man and then to the stage of their spiritual evolution or to their endowment with excellent qualities. The word صورنكم means the bestowel of excellent qualities (Mufridat-i-Raghib). Taking the verse in its perspective, it would signify that the incident of Adam's appointment as Khalifa took place at a time when humanity had reached a certain stage of spiritual awareness and not at the time when man was originally created.

Adam has been mentioned in some other verses of the Holy Quran also but nowhere it has been claimed that he was the first man to be created. Conversely, the above quoted verses clearly show that he was not the first man to be created but the first prophet of God on this earth.

In the end the following verse of the Holy Quran is also reproduced for consideration in this respect. It says :

"Who has made perfect everything which He has created. And He began the creation of man from clay, then He made his progeny from an extract of an insignificant fluid ;

"Then He endowed him with perfect faculties and breathed into him of His Spirit. And He has given you ears, and eyes, and hearts. But little thanks do you give !" (32 : 8-10)

In this verse the evolution of man has been set down in the following order :

1. Man's creation from clay.

2. Progagation of his race through sperm-drop.
3. Perfection of his faculties.
4. Descent of Divine revelation upon him.

It is clear from the above that Divine revelation descended upon humans after their propagation had started through sperm drop and their faculties had reached a certain stage of perfection. It did not descend on them when they were created from clay. This rules out the possibility of Hazrat Adam being the first man, for he was blessed with Divine revelation and so must have been born to his parents through sperm-drop.

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(English rendering by Nur-ud-Din Muneer)

The Early Life and Mission of the Promised Messiah

(In his own words)

I have been inspired by God to execute a special mission and to invite men to the truth. God has committed to me a message, and has commanded me to deliver it to the world. I have taken this work in hand at the bidding of my Master, and it is nothing but doing my duty and paying the debt which I owe to the world.

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I have descended from noble and respectable ancestors. I have received information from on high that their original home was Samarqand. After their settlement in this country, the reigning monarch, knowing their position and nobility, entrusted them with the command of armies and the government of provinces. In course of time one of my forefathers became the head of an independent state. He and his descendents ruled over it ably and peacefully until the time when the Sikh hordes overran this fair country. The brief term of Sikh ascendency was marked by complete anarchy and bloodshed, and the people were plunged into unspeakable misery. The state of my ancestors could not hold out against the rapacious Sikhs ; they siezed upon it and threw the reigning chief into prison. Afterwards they turned him and his family out of home. It was winter and the nights were terribly cold. Shivering with cold and utterly prostrate with grief at their sad lot, the sufferers were turned out one dismal stormy night from their fathers' land, and were compelled to seek asylum in a neighbouring state whose ruler was friendly to them. He opened to them his hospitable door and received them as honoured guests. At last the measure of Sikh iniquity became full to the brim, and the time came when the plundering career of these marauders was to receive a check.

The British came from the East like the rising sun and dispelled the dark clouds of Sikh tyranny. They gave the country not only peace and tranquility but above all religious liberty which to me seems the greatest boon which a just ruler can confer upon a subject people. The victims of Sikh oppression once more breathed freely. The surviving members of our family returned to their native country to share in the general peace and received back a small part of their former state.

Time went on. At last my turn came; but almost nothing of my ancestral state descended to me and at my father's death I was left quite forlorn. At this period of my life scarcely any body knew me. Even my fellow villagers gave me the cold shoulder and I was forsaken by everybody. But I was quite satisfied with my lot and never showed signs of discontent. Indeed, I had never at any time in my life sought honour and distinction. I was naturally inclined to lead a retired and an unknown life and never thought of being considered a distinguished member of society. Even in my father's life-time, I never liked to receive visits. Long interviews were always irksome to me and they made me sad and downcast. This disposition in me did not escape the notice of my father. He gave up all hope of me and regarded me as little better than a guest who ate his bread and did nothing for him. Being fully convinced that I was given up to solitude and a life of devotion, and had a fixed aversion to mixing with society, he had great apprehensions of my condition in the world. He urged me to improve my worldly prospects and do something for my material prosperity. Like a kind father, he painted before me worldly greatness in very vivid colours, but in this matter found me quite deaf and blind. For me these pleasures had no attraction because I felt myself irresistably drawn to the source of all enjoyments.

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At length the time came when God called away my father. When my father was yet alive and before any fatal symptoms appeared, the Word of God came to me at midday foretelling

my father's death after sunset that very day. No sooner the idea of his death passed into my mind then the inspiration of God broke forth upon me in the following words :

الیس اللہ بکاف عبدہ

"Is not God sufficient for His servant".

My father died after sunset as the Word of God had spoken, and this happened on a Sunday night. It was thus on a Sunday that I passed from the shelter of worldly protectors into the protection of my great Master. As the creation of the world commenced on a Sunday, So God ordained that Sunday should also be the first day of that glorious new world into which I was entering. In memory of this blessed inspiration, I immediately got the words of God engraved on the stone of a ring which I have always kept with me. In accordance with this Word which God spoke to me, He took charge of all my affairs, Himself became my teacher, Himself guided my soul in all concerns, Himself supplied me with all I required and Himself crowned me with honour and glory. I was unknown, God made me famous ; I was unrecognised, God gave me glory and renown ; I was in want, God granted me affluence. This grand prophecy now shines forth like the Meridian sun.

Thus God gave me honour and glory. But I had not the least idea that He would present me before the world as the Promised Messiah, and through me would fulfil His promise. As for myself I always shunned the path of renown and wanted to be left alone with my meditations. I studiously avoided society and all my enjoyment consisted in living a retired life. But God's command was imperative. He charged me with the duty of inviting men to Him and fulfil His pleasure. I took up that duty like a faithful servant.

I have a friend whose love has pervaded my whole being and has made me averse to worldly greatness.

I see that the land of those who seek the world, is often stricken with famine ; but the land of love never sees dearth.

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Most men are drawn to the pleasures of sense, but I am attracted to that beautiful face whose sight gives eternal bliss.

I cleave to my beloved One and this nearness has lighted up the recesses of my heart.

I have vowed a solemn vow that I will never quit His side even if lions and wolves may tear me to pieces.

Other people's glory departs with their death, but the glory which love brings is everlasting.

They abused me and I do not know why; shall I ever desert my friend and act against His will.

In this way I became wholly God's and cut off all connections with the world and its people, and had very little to do with its concerns. I remember that I was quite young when I felt myself powerfully attracted towards my Lord and there dawned upon me the dim consciousness of a future when God would use me as His instrument in carrying out one of His great plans. I was like gold hidden in dust which was to display its brightness at last. In my youth when my father saw that I was slow in the business of the world and was always devoted to religion, he was much ill at ease and tried his best to persuade me to climb the heights of worldly greatness, and gain wealth like my forefathers. But he little knew that God had another sort of greatness in store for me. He illumined me when the world was immersed in cimmerian darkness, and made me a beacon of light to give light to the whole world, and by His grace He made me the Promised Messiah. Then He helped me in various ways. He manifested Himself to me and eclipsed the sun and moon to verify my claim. The announcement of my claim to the Promised Messiahship was received by the Maulvies with outbursts of great indignation. They set me up as a liar and branded me with heresy. Had it not been for the fear of the authorities, they would have taken my life. They thought that the Messiah would come down from heaven. I did my best to make them think to the con-

trary and by reasons and arguments pointed out to them the error of their belief, but they persistently shut their ears against me.

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Listen O earth ! and bear witnesss O heaven that I have received inspiration from on high and have found access to the Divine mysteries. I have been sent in the early part of this century in order that I may restore Islam to its original purity, and as a judge remove the differences that are tearing asunder the Muhammadan sects, and armed with the weapons of heavenly signs, destroy all false principles, and bring about a spiritual tranformation in the whole world. I am not an impostor nor am I given to lies. God knows that I am not one of these who lead men into evil and sin. Let every one remember that a liar never prospers but meets a disgraceful and miserable end. My revelations are from God and have all the signs of a Divine revelation. They are repeatedly impressed upon me as being from God and my heart is filled with the conviction that they are Divine. They are always in conformity with the letter aud spirit of the Holy Quran. They are accompanied by extraordinary manifestations from heaven and their heavenly origin is confirmed by the heavenly signs which attend them. Therefore they are not delusions but real manifestations of Divine will. Does the world think that it cost me nothing to receive this inestimable blessing ? No ; I had to undergo the severest hardships. I flung myself into the fire of love and was wholly consumed. My heart bled and I was ground to dust. It was then He revealed to me His radiant face and I got not only revelation but also true wisdom. Most of the revelations which I receive contain prophecies. Now, the deep secrets of the future are known to none but God, and therefore, he who foretells the future, must necessarily be from Him. The wicked who set their affections upon worldly glory can never get access to what is exclusively God's. Can God take into His confidence one who has set the trap of fraud to ensnare His people, who instead of showing men the right path leads

them to destruction and injures the cause of truth? It cannot be. God brings the impostor to a bitter end. He invariably and speedily roots him out and sends him to eternal perdition.

It is a Law of God that He always raises a reformer at the time of spiritual and moral decay. Agreeably to this law, He revealed Himself to me that through me He might infuse new life into men, dead in spirit. He exalted me to the dignity of Mahdi and Messiah and opened up to me all the treasures of sacred wisdom. He has made me His instrument in bringing falsehood to naught. The reason of the Messiah being styled the Judge (Hakam) is that he shall make his appearance when the Muslim community shall have been split into many and contending sects. The Messiah shall put a stop to all discord by his just and final verdict in all religious questions. In his days no system of belief shall be free from conflict of opinions. But he shall sift truth from error and shall take up the side of truth and declare against error. The cause of his being called the Mahdi (the Guided) is that for his wisdom and knowledge he shall not be indebted to mortals but the Almighty Himself shall be his instructor and guiding star as He was of the Holy Prophet. He shall enjoy personal communion with God and shall be educated in the seminary of heaven. He is entitled the Messiah* because for the propagation of Islam he shall not wield weapons, but shall place his sole reliance upon heaven whose blessings he shall call down as if by a miraculous touch and gain his ends through them. The weapon at his command shall be his heartfelt prayer uttered with tearful eyes.

(Review of Religions, February, 1903)

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* Prophetic writings speak of two Messiahs. One of them is the false Messiah—that pretender to Messiahship whose irruptions shall take place in the last ages of the world. The other shall be the true Messiah who shall also appear in the last

ages. The false Messiah shall make use of crooked policies and shall be impure in all his ways and dealings, and shall have recourse to misinterpretation of the Word of God, gross deception, pious fraud and many other base devices, and shall prop up falsehood by base contrivances and shall be called Antichrist. His business shall be the telling of lies and the seduction of people from right path. But the true Messiah shall place his sole reliance upon God and taking his eyes off all material aids shall make prayer his only resource and shall soar heavenward until he shall touch the heaven by means of his trust in God. His work shall be to support the cause of truth and rescue the perishing. The word Messiah مسیح comes from Masah (touch) which implies that he shall touch the heavens as well as the earth.

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An Argument for the truth of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet

The Holy Quran has asserted most emphatically that it is the Word of God and that our Lord and Master, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, is God's true prophet on whom the Holy Word descended. These assertions are set forth clearly in the following verses of the Quran,

الم - الله لا اله الا هو الحی القیوم

نزل علیک الکتاب با الحق

"God is He who has not His equal; He is the source of all life and existence; He has sent His Book to thee with truth and truly to satisfy a need. (3 : 2-4)

And again,

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یا ایها الناس قد جاءکم الرسول بالحق

"O people, our apostle has come to you when he was truly needed". (4 : 171)

و بالحق انزلناه و بالحق نزل

"At a time of true and long-felt need have we revealed our Word and it has come to you when your (social, moral and spiritual) states stood in urgent need of it". (17 : 106)

یا ایها الناس قد جاءکم برهان من ربکم

و انزلنا الیکم نوراً مبینا

"O ye, people this sure argument has come to you and We have sent to you a manifest light". (4 : 175)

قل يا ايها الناس انى رسول الله اليكم جميعا

"O Prophet ! say to the people, I have been sent as an apostle to you all". (7 : 159)

و الذين آمنوا و عملوا الصلحت و آمنوا بمـا
نزل على محمد و هو الحق من ربهم كفر عنهم
سياتهم و اصلح بالهم

"And as to those who believed and did righteous deeds and believed in the Word that has been revealed to Muhammad and the same is a true revelation, God shall forgive their sins and better their state. (47 : 3)

Similar other verses abound in the Quran in which it has been asserted in clear words that the Holy Quran is the Word of God and the Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him. is His true Prophet. This will suffice for the present, but at the same time we challenge the advocates of all other religions to produce in the first place similar emphatic assertions of the truth of the principles they adhere to, from their own revealed books.

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For, it should be borne in mind, it is the first requirement of a revealed book that it should claim a Divine source for itself and if it hesitates to declare itself so, it is absurd for others to hold or declare it as such.

But the important point to which we wish to draw the reader's attention is that the Quran has not simply claimed a Divine origin for itself and a true heavenly mission for the Prophet Muhammad, but it has also proved that statement with the most strong and cogent arguments, and it is here that all other books with any pretensions to being the revealed Word of God cannot stand the test which the Holy Quran so admir-

ably puts forth and satisfies. Here we would mention only one of the several arguments that the Quran has produced to support its assertions and leave it for the reader to compare the Quran with the religious books of other creeds so far as this argument goes. The opponents of Islam are requested to produce similar argument bearing upon the truth of their own systems and place it before the public, or if they cannot do this, publish the fact and admit that their books are deviod of such an effective proof. We can declare it with certainty that all other religious systems are wanting in the method of proof we have here stated as being a characteristic of the Holy Quran.

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Let us now consider the first argument to which reference has been made above. It will be admitted on all hands that by far the most important indication of the appearance of a revealed book and of a true prophet of God is their need. In other words, they should appear at a time when darkness prevails over the face of the earth, when the unity of God, righteousness, justice and knowledge vanish away, and idolatry, and ignorance prevail in their stead, and when a reformer is badly needed. It is also necessary that such a prophet should only depart from the world when he has brought about the desired reformation and established a state of things calculated to promote the moral ideas and welfare of the people, and so long as his work is not finished and transformation has not been brought about, he should be protected from his enemies by the hand of the Almighty. In short, like servants, he should both come and depart as it were under orders. A heavenly mission is established and an apostle raised when circumstances create a necessity for it and time bears witness to the need of one, and he is called back under a prophetic revelation when the plant of reformation is firmly rooted and a mighty revolution has taken place.

So far we have dealt with the argument generally. Now

we will show how far it applies particularly to the circumstances under which the Holy Prophet Muhammad appeared and was called back. The Prophet claimed to have been sent for all nations of the earth, and the Holy Quran has condemned all the nations for setting up with God other gods and for corruption and moral depravity. Thus it says:

ظهر الفساد في البر و البحر

"The land and the sea have both become corrupt," (gone astray). (30 : 42)

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And again,

ليكون للعلمين نذيرا

"We have sent thee that thou mayest be a warner to all people that they have been adjudged guilty in the eyes of the Lord on account of their false beliefs and demoralization." (25:2)

It should be borne in mind that the word "warn" here is a sure indication that the Holy Quran asserted the whole world to be corrupted and to have gone astray from the path of truth and righteousness, since admonition is only for the corrupt and the vicious who are forewarned as to the dangerous consequences of their evil doings. Warning has nothing to do with the righteous, for the prophets of God bring good tidings to the faithful servants of God and warning to the transgressors. When, therefore, a prophet is described as a warner to the whole world, it follows that the Word of God revealed to that prophet declares the whole world to be in a state of moral turpitude. Such an assertion has neither been made of Moses in the pentateuch, nor of Jesus in the Gospels, but only of our Holy Prophet in the Quran. In one place we have

كنتم على شفا حفرة من النار

"Before We sent our apostle to you, you were on the verge of a pit of fire." (3 : 104).

The Quran also warned the Jews and Christians that they had faithlessly altered the books of God and taken lead in every sort of mischief and vice. It reproached the idolators again and again for worshipping human beings, stones, elements and stars, for misappropriating the properties of orphans, murdering infants, violating the rights of relations and for excesses of every sort. It then says:

اعلموا ان الله يحى الارض بعد موتها

"Know it for certain that the earth was all dead and God shall now restore it to life." (27 : 18)

In short, the Quran adjudged the whole world as guilty of setting up false gods, idolatry and transgression, the main spring in which all evils take their rise. It emphatically declared the Jews and the Christians to be the source and origin of the evils of the world and dwelt at length upon their corruptions. The Holy Quran shows that the world then presented a hideous picture which was all darkness and deformity without a speck of beauty.

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We have here referred to a very few verses of the Holy Quran bearing on the subject in hand for the sake of brevity. But the Quran almost teems with verses describing most effectively how the whole world had been given to corruption, how the earth had become a dead mass without a spark of life and how the people had reached the very verge of the pit of fire. The Quran repeatedly exhorts the Prophet to warn the world that it had fallen into a seriously dangerous state. Even cursory glance at the pages of the Quran would show that the whole world at that time was totally immersed in darkness and stinked with the noxious evils of idolatry, setting up false gods and other transgressions and abominations. The Gospels, no doubt, speak of the mischiefs and trans-

gresssions of the Jews but Jesus is nowhere reported to have said that all the people on the face of the earth had become corrupt and morally depraved, nor did he ever claim to be an apostle to all the nations of the earth. The sphere of his action was limited to a small section of the Jews, nor were his exhortations addressed to any but the inhabitants of a few villages of the Jewish tribe. In bold contrast with this the Quran plainly asserts the whole world as involved in ignorance and darkness, the whole earth as dead with every sort of sin, and all the nations as having gone astray. The Jews of the time of Jesus, however deficient in acting upon the precepts of the Old Testament, believed in its inspirtions, but when the Quran undertook the work of reformation, it had to correct not only the transgressions of the law but also the false principles and dangerous beliefs then prevalent. Atheism then prevailed in all its force, vast numbers rejected the inspiration and revelations of God, and those who accepted a Creator of the universe were immersed in evils of every sort. The world had gone astray in doctrine and practice alike. Thus while the mission of Jesus was limited to his own small community, and he only enumerated some of the mischiefs of his own tribe, thereby also showing the limits of his purpose, the mission of the Prophet of Islam was directed to the whole world as also appears from the Holy Quran mentioning a general corruption of the whole world. The appearance, therefore, of the Prophet at the time of a universal depravity and general corruption, and his being called back after working a thorough transformation, are, with the additional fact of the Quran itself presenting both sides of this argument and directing attention to it in forcible words, matters which one would in vain turn over the pages of history of revelation to find elsewhere.

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It is, we think, hardly necessary to describe in detail the various corruptions and false beliefs of the various nations of the earth ; suffice it to say on this point that this statement

of the Quran is amply borne out by a perusal of the history of the time. The admisson of every people as to their own state, strongly corroborates the statement of the Quran as to the darkness of that age when every nation had given up the worship of the Creator for that of the creatures. It is for this reason that when the Quran declared all nations to have gone astray and to have been morally corrupt, none could clear itself of the guilt. In contrast with their silence and admission take the decided and peremptory words of the Quran which describe the moral death and spiritual lethargy of the people. How expressive is the following injunction :

و لا یکونوا کا الذین اوتو الکتاب من قبل فطال علیهم الامد فقست قلوبهم و کثیر منهم فسقون اعلموا ان الله یحی الارض بعد موتها قد بینا لکم الایات لعلکم تعقلون

"The Muslims ought to avoid the course of conduct adopted by the Ahl-i-Kitab. They were entrusted with the Word of God before them, but after the lapse of a period their hearts were hardened and most of them are transgressors and practisers of evil deeds. Know it also that the earth had been dead and God is now again restoring it to life. These are the signs of the need of the Holy Quran and of its truth which We have described that you may understand them." (57 : 17 18)

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Thus we have stated one part of the argument and shown that Quran itself brings it forward, and to direct attention to it closes it with the words :

قد بینا لکم الایات

"It is a sign that the Quran and the Prophet come from God which we have stated that you may think and arrive at the right conclusion."

Now we shall consider the second part of the argument,

viz. that the Prophet of God was called back from this world, to his heavenly Master after he had fully performed the business for which he came. The Quran affords ample proof of this and says :

اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم و اتممت عليكم نعمتى و رضيت لكم الاسلام دينا

"This is the day that I have brought your faith to perfection by giving you the perfect Quran and by working a complete transformation in your souls, and completed my blessings upon you and chosen the faith of Islam for you." (6 : 4)

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The purport of this is that the revelation of the Quran was made complete, the Holy word of God effected the most wonderful transformation in capable souls, perfected their training and completed heavenly blessings upon them. Now this verse states in clear and precise language that the Prophet's death did not take place until the faith of Islam had been made consummate by a complete delivery of the Quran and a thorough regeneration of souls. It should also be noticed that it is the companions of the Prophet who are addressed in this verse of the Holy Quran, indicating thereby that the verse did not simply refer to a complete delivery of the Quran but to the thorough transformation of souls that had been effected in the companions and to the completion of the blessings upon them, the mission of the Prophet thus attaining the desired goal. This is, moreover, a criterion of the truth of a heavenly mission and such success is never granted to a false claimant. Nay, before the time of our Holy Prophet, not even the true prophets attained to the excellence and the height of success which is observable in the case of our Prophet. No instance can be mentioned of any other reformer in whose case the revealed book should have so peacefully been completed on the one hand and a thorough change from iniquity to rectitude effected so successfully and in such

large number on the other, and in addition to this, unbelief should have so hopelessly been overthrown and Islam so firmly established and so successfully victorious.

Again, the Quran has in another place,

اذا جاء نصرالله و الفتح و رايت الناس

يدخلون فى دين الله افواجا

"When the promised help of God and victory came to thee and thou sawest the people enter into the religion of God (i.e. accept the faith of Islam) in vast numbers, praise thou God and sanctify His name and seek His protection for He comes with mercy upon man." (110 : 2-4)

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In this verse we are informed that the object which the Prophet of God had in view was attained, viz., people entered into Islam by thousands. The verse in other words refers to the near end of the worldly career of the Prophet, and so it happened, for within one year of this revelation the Prophet died. It also appears from this verse that the Prophet of God had it at heart, that he should see the spread of Islam in his life time, and it was most disagreeable to his feelings that he should have departed before the mission he had brought, had been firmly established. In this verse, therefore, God gives His Prophet the good tidings that He had fulfilled all his desires inasmuch as Islam had taken a firm root in the very life time of its founder. Every prophet more or less had this object at heart but as they had not the same strong feeling and assiduity, to none, not even to Moses or Jesus but this glad tidings was given to one and one only of whom the Quran says:

لعلك باخع نفسك الا يكونو مومنين

"Shalt thou kill thyself with the anxiety that these people do not believe." (18: 7)

From all this we see that the clearest proof is afforded

of the truth of the Quran and of the mission of the Prophet by the circumstance that the Prophet appeared to fill a need strongly and generally felt by the world and was not recalled from his office until he had firmly established the truth. At his appearance with his prophetic mission he clearly proved his need to the world and adjudged all the nations guilty of setting up fal e gods, of wickedness and of transgression. The Quran teems with instances of this. To add one to the list already given, take

تبارك الذى نزل الفرقان على عبده ليكون للعلمين نذيرا

"Highly blessed is He who revealed the Quran to His servant that he may warn the whole world and admonish them for their going astray from the right path and adhering to false beliefs." (25:2)

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The verse proves by itself that the Quran asserted the appearance of the Prophet to have taken place at a time when all the nations of the earth had become corrupt, and those who were so described by the Word of God set seal to the truth of these words not only by their silence in opposition to such a bold assertion of the Quran but also by their own confessions of guilt. This clearly shows that as the corruption of the world at that time was a general and complete one, so a reformer of equally extraordinary powers was needed to restore the proper order of things. Hence the Prophet appeared at a time when a true and great prophet—the greatest of prophets indeed—was needed and expected. As the argument is without a flaw in respect to the appearance of our Holy Prophet it is equally sound with respect to his departure. A great many verses of the Quran show that the Prophet went back to his heavenly Master after his teachings had been made perfect and all that was needed in religion had been communicated with care and accuracy. Before his death also the Prophet was informed that assistance from heaven was granted to his faith in all its fullness, and people embraced Islam in large numbers. Verses were also reveal-

ed showing that God had strongly impressed faith and righteousness upon their hearts and made them detest all sorts of iniquity and oppression. They were invested wiih the best and most excellent moral virtues and a radical change marked their lives and their whole course of conduct. Then followed the revelation of the chapter named Victory as a message from the most High that the object of the Prophet's mission was entirely fulfil'ed and Islam had won the hearts of the people. Upon this the Prophet publicly announced that the chapter hinted at his approaching death. Immediately afterwards he performed the pilgrimage which he called the حجةالوداع or the farewell pilgrimage, to Mecca, and on the back of a camel delive:ed a lengthy speech to the assembled multitude which could only be counted by thousands. At the close of the speech he addressed the whole audience in the following words:

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"O people of God ! My Lord entrusted me with all these commandments that I may deliver them to you. Do you then bear witness that I have delivered the message of the most High and *fulfilled my mission ?*"

The whole multitude replied in one voice :

"Yes, verily, you have delivered the message of the Lord to us."

Then the Prophet of God looked thrice to heaven each time saying :

"O God, I beseech Thee bear Thou witness to this."

Again addressing the people he said that the reason of his calling upon them to bear witness to his delivering of the Divine message was that, perhaps, the following year they shall not see him there amongst them. So fully satisfied with the success of his mission and in glory, he left his companions for his eternal journey a few months later at Medina.

GOD, MY BELOVED

(Taken from A Tabshir Book, "Persian Pearls", an English rendering of the Promised Messiah's selected Persian poems .

Sweetheart,
How surpassingly beautiful
Is Thy Face, Thy manifestation !
And how surpassing sweet
Are Thy attributes !
The moment I saw Thy Face,
To Thee I lost my heart :
And from that time onward,
Apart from Thee,
There has remained
Nothing at all, for me,
In the whole world !
Thou art my Beloved,
For whose dear sake
I have renounced everything
Else—have renounced
Both the worlds !
But even at that,
The fire of separation
Consumes my poor bones !
It is easy for one
To consign one's body
To leaping flames :
But the agony of separation
Forces even the stoutest heart
To cry for quarter—
To cry for mercy !

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